

Ting Sun's Opening Remarks for JLAC Hearing

July 13, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

Room 447

- Good morning. My name is Ting Sun, and I am the Chair of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. I am joined by Vice Chair Charles Gahagan, who is a teacher in Moreno Valley. Thank you for this opportunity to update you on the recommendations of the state audit which raised some serious concerns about the operation of the CTC's Division of Professional Practices (DPP).
- We fully recognize that this division has responsibility for one of the most critical functions of our agency – ensuring that educators who hold a license to teach in our public schools adhere to the highest ethical standards of conduct.
- On behalf of the 17 current members of the Commission, I want to assure you that we take very seriously our responsibility to California's 6 million school children and their parents, and apologize for the concerns raised by the legislature, the public and members of the press that have resulted from the audit findings.
- The audit has pointed to problems which should never have been allowed to develop. I have stated several times that any unwarranted delays in processing, no matter the level of seriousness of the alleged misconduct is inexcusable.
- As a result, over the past two months since its release, we have taken swift and immediate steps to address and correct the recent findings of the State Auditor.
- In the past, commissioners have not engaged in the daily oversight and operations of the agency. This was a mistake. This audit has pointed out to us that mismanagement and inefficient processes have impeded the

mission and the policies of the Commission. Therefore, we have taken immediate action.

- Key management changes have been made. // The Executive Director stepped down on June 3. // The current General Counsel will no longer be with the agency at the end of this month.
- As you already know, since early June, Patty Wohl and Teri Clark have been temporarily appointed to jointly run the agency, and we have directed them to move as quickly as possible to make any changes necessary to streamline processes in our Division of Professional Practices.
- Just yesterday the Commission took action to approve Beth Graybill, who you all know, to serve as interim Executive Director effective Monday July 18. Beth will be on loan to us from the Senate Education Committee until we have a new, permanent Executive Director in place.
- Ms. Wohl and Ms. Clark, although I'm sure happy to return to their regular duties, have volunteered to continue helping with the data tracking project. In addition, we are conducting interviews for a new General Counsel in two weeks and will have someone in that role next month.
- These administrative changes are key to putting us back on track.
- At the same time we have been conducting a thorough search for and are in the process of screening and interviewing for a permanent Executive Director to provide new leadership, and we anticipate that person will be in place by October.
- At my direction one of the first tasks of the new Executive Director will be to develop a new strategic plan for the Commission and to ensure that **all** of our divisions work at the highest levels of transparency and collaboration so that we can attain our mission of providing the highest quality educators to our public school.

- I hope that today marks a new beginning for the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. It is our goal to get back on track because the work we do is so important to the students of California.

I will have Teri Clark and Patty Wohl update you on the specific steps we have taken to address the audit recommendations. Teri and Patty?

CLOSE:

- In closing, we want to express our appreciation to the Ms. Howe and her staff for shedding light on practices and processing flaws within our Division of Professional Practices. We see how audits can be effective management tools – and this one has highlighted management shortcomings and ways for us to improve service.
- The results of the audit have also emphasized to us as Commissioners that we may have often overly relied on the Executive Director and staff. As a part of the changes we are making in the agency, Commission members and I are now working in partnership with the new commission leadership to address concerns and make sure we exercise closer oversight.
- As the current chair and appointed member with the longest tenure on the Commission, I am committed to making sure that all audit recommendations are implemented as expeditiously as possible.
- My 25-year career has been committed to education - first as a classroom teacher, a school administrator and as an educational reformer. I want to assure you that the issues raised in the audit troubled me deeply both on a personal and professional level.
- Improving educational outcomes for California's students have been my life and nothing troubles me more than the public thinking that we aren't doing our very best to ensure that every one of our classroom teachers is the best he or she can be.

- I promise you that righting this agency will be my and my fellow Commissioner's singular focus over the next year. Thank you. We will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

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